The Maulana Azad Education Foundation (MAEF) and the Central Wakf Council function under the aegis of the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment and provide financial assistance for the development of minorities.

(b) The amount spent under these schemes during the last two years, year-wise is as under:

(Rs. in crore)

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	Amount Spent	
		2001-02	2002-03
1.	NMDFC	96.83	73.93
2.	MAEF	9.48	7.90
3.	Area Intensive & Madrasas Modernisation	17.30	28.44
4.	Pre-examination Coaching for weaker sections	2.96	1.39
5.	Central Wakf Council	1.40	1.68

National Commission for disabled persons

2130. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) by when the proposed National Commission for persons with disabilities is likely to commence its functioning and simultaneously whether any time-bound provisions have been made for providing the necessary infrastructure as past experience in this regard is quite dismal *viz-a-viz* similar other Commissions; and

(b) whether any budgetary allocation has been earmarked for the remaining months of 2003-04 so that funds crunch does not become a major handicap for the commission's functioning and the modalities suggested for its reports and periodicity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL):

(a) The process of creation of posts for the National Commission and arrangement of accommodation for housing this body is underway. It is expected that the Commission will start its work during the next quarter of the financial year.

(b) Adequate funds have been sought in the current year for setting up of the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities.

National Policy for Senior Citizens

2131. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had announced adoption of a National Policy for Senior Citizens in 1999;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress achieved so far in implementing the basics of the aforesaid policy in providing relief to the elderly persons in various sectors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI NAGMANI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government has announced the National Policy on Older Persons in the year 1999 which, *inter-alia* visualizes support for financial security, health care and nutrition, shelter, emphasis upon education, training and information needs, provision of appropriate concessions and discounts etc. to senior citizens and special attention to protect and strengthen their legal rights such as to safeguard their life and property. It recognizes persons as 60+ as Senior Citizens.

(c) In order to achieve the objectives of the National Policy on Older Persons, the Government has constituted a National Council for Older Persons in the year 1999 under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment to advise and aid the Government on policies and programmes for older persons and also to provide feedback to the Government on the implementation of the National Policy on Older Persons as well as on specific programmes initiatives for older persons.